

STORIES
FOR
LITTLE CHILDREN,

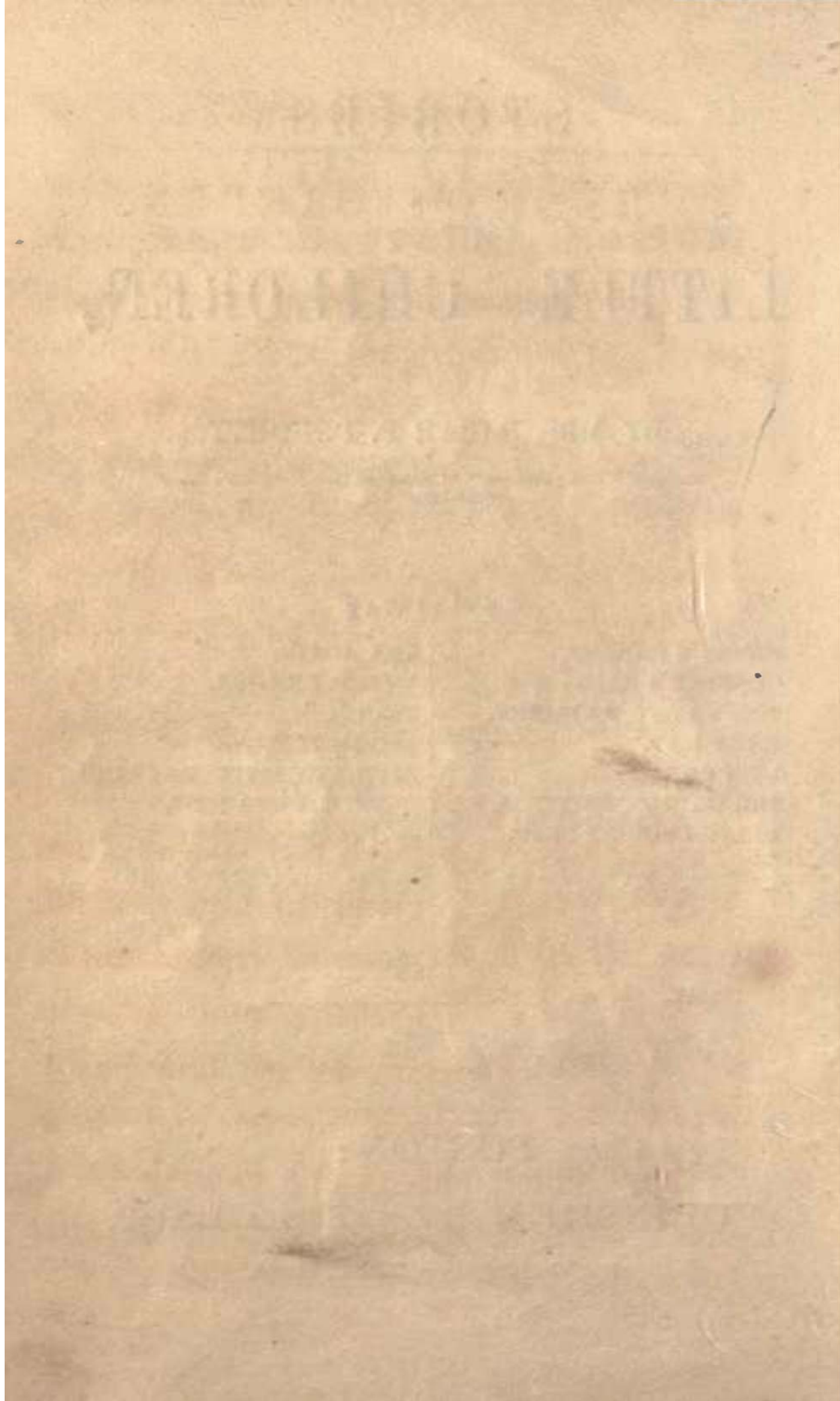
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Swedenborg," &c.

Containing

HENRY'S GARDEN.	TRY AGAIN.
CHARLEY'S KITE.	WORKS OF LOVE.
THE WAY TO BE HAPPY.	TRUTH.
MARY MAY.	LITTLE THINGS.
I FORGOT.	LITTLE BY LITTLE THE BIRD
THE HAPPY CHRISTMAS.	BUILDS HER NEST.
DOING GOOD AT PLAY.	

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HENRY'S GARDEN.



HENRY'S father had given to him a small piece of ground for a garden, and it was pleasant to see how busily he worked in it, and how much pleasure he took in keeping it in neat order. It was

early in the spring when the ground was given to him, and Henry knew that this was the time to dig the ground and plant the seeds. He did not think, as some foolish children do, that he knew how to do this as well as any one; but he went to his father, one day, when he was at leisure, and asked if he would please to tell him how to prepare the ground, and what seeds he had better plant in it.

His father gave him a small spade, and told him to dig the garden all over as well as he could, and to pick up any stones that he found amongst the loose earth and carry them away, and then he might take a rake and try to make the ground look as smooth and nice as the large garden did, which John, the gardener, had been putting in order. He kindly went out himself and showed his

little boy how to use the spade and rake, and he told him that he would give him some seeds of pretty flowers, and show him how to plant them.

Henry generally went to school every day, and could not spend all the time in working or playing for himself, but now he had a week's vacation, and he thought it would be a grand time to work in his garden.

He did exactly as his father had told him, and was very careful not to leave any stones amongst the earth, for he knew that flowers could not grow in stony ground. He picked up the stones and put them into his wheelbarrow. Then he wheeled them away to a place where the gardener and the men who worked in the fields had put a large pile of stones. "I think my father is going to build a wall," said Henry; "the

stones from my garden will help him a little."

By the time Henry had spaded the ground and carried away the stones, he felt quite tired, and his mother advised him not to work any more that day, but to come into the house and wash his face and hands, and sit down quietly and read in a pretty new book which his aunt had given him.

Henry felt sorry to leave the garden before he had raked it; and he said,

"Mother, I am not so very tired. May I stay in the garden and work another hour?"

His mother told him that she thought it would be much better to leave it until the next day, and Henry did not urge her any more, but carefully put away the spade and wheelbarrow, and came directly into the house.

His mother was pleased to see him so obedient, and after he had washed his face and hands she gave him a cake and an apple to eat. Henry thanked her, and, taking his book, he sat down in his little rocking-chair and began to read.

He found a very pleasant story about an elephant that took care of a little child who had strayed from his mother, and was in danger of being crushed to death by the crowd in the street.

Henry liked this story so much that he resolved to read it aloud to his mother when she was at leisure, and he looked at the number of the page, and repeated it over several times, so that he might be sure to remember the place.

He read another short story, and then his mother called him into her own room

and told him that if he was quite rested he might take a walk with her.

Henry loved to walk with his mother, and he thanked her, and said he was not tired at all then. Reading his pretty book had rested him.

As they walked along, Henry looked carefully among the grass at the sides of the road, hoping to find a flower for his mother, and at length he saw quite a large cluster of violets upon a sunny bank at a little distance from them. He gathered these, and soon after found two or three anemones, with delicate blossoms of the very palest pink.

"Now, mother, you will have a beautiful bunch of flowers," exclaimed Henry, "if I can only find a few green leaves to put with them."

"A piece of this evergreen will look

pretty," replied his mother, and she handed him a sprig, as she spoke.

"I am very glad that spring has come again with the birds and flowers," said Henry. "I will try to finish my garden to-morrow, and when my flowers grow you shall have a pretty bouquet every morning, mother. Father has promised to give me some seeds, and he has told John to take a rose-bush from the large garden and put it into mine. Is it not strange, mother, that beautiful plants can grow from such very small seeds?"

"It is indeed very wonderful, Henry. The whole plant—root, stem, leaves, and flowers—is shut up in a little brown case, not much larger, sometimes, than the head of a pin. You may learn a great many useful lessons while working in your little garden."

“What kind of lessons, mother? I should like to learn lessons in my garden better than to learn them at school.”

“If you love to learn what your garden teaches you, it will help you to love to learn your other lessons, Henry,” replied his mother, smiling. “I also have a little garden, which I love very much. I try to clear away all the stones and rubbish, and when the ground is soft and smooth, I sometimes plant little seeds in it, and watch to see them spring up and bear flowers and fruit.”

“Where is your garden, mother?” asked Henry. “Do you mean our large garden, where John works?”

“No, Henry, my garden is not just like the one that John works in. Your father and I have the care of it at present. We try to fill it with useful and

beautiful plants, but sometimes we find evil weeds springing up, and then we work diligently to root them out, and we pray to the Lord to help us."

"Ah, mother, now I know what you mean. I am your little garden, and the evil weeds are wicked thoughts and feelings. Father has told me something about this ; but what are the seeds which you said you planted in your garden ? "

"The seeds are the truths which we teach you, Henry. Everything which you learn is like a seed planted in your mind. The love and wisdom of the Lord shines upon you, as the sun shines upon your garden, and causes the little seeds to spring up and grow, by its light and heat. The Lord is the sun of the spiritual world, and his wisdom is

the light of that world, and his love is the heat of it.

“When you think about any truth which has been taught you, and wish to do it, your thoughts are like the green leaves upon the little plants. The good actions which these truths teach you to perform are like the pretty flowers and pleasant fruits which grow in the gardens.

“If you suffer evil thoughts and feelings to remain in your mind, and lead you to do what you know to be wrong, they will kill the good and true affections which have been stored there, just as the weeds in a garden will choke all the good seed, if they are not carefully rooted out.”

Henry listened attentively to what his mother said, and tried to understand it.

He thought about it for a little while, and then he asked her if she could tell him the names of any of the seeds which she had planted in her little garden.

His mother smiled at this question, and replied, "Yes, Henry, I will name a few:—Obedience, Truth, Industry, Love of being Useful, Order, Cleanliness, and Good Manners."

"What funny names your plants have, mother!" said Henry. "Have any of them grown up and blossomed yet?"

"They are growing pretty well, Henry. I saw a blossom on Obedience, this morning, when you left your work so readily and came into the house."

Henry looked pleased as his mother said this, and he told her that he meant to try to have all the plants in her garden full of blossoms.

“Your heavenly Father will cause the good plants to grow, my son,” replied his mother, “and he will help you to remove the evil weeds, if you sincerely desire it. We must all look to him as the only Source of goodness and truth.”

It was now time to return home, and in another hour Henry had eaten his supper of bread and milk, and bade his father and mother good-night, with a happy heart. Before he lay his head upon his pillow he kneeled by the bed-side and repeated the Lord's prayer, and as he thought of what his mother had said to him, he really desired that the Lord would help him to remove every evil thought and feeling, and cause those which were good and true to grow up and blossom and bear fruit.

CHARLIE'S KITE.



ONE day Charlie was very busy pulling up the weeds in his little garden, when he heard his mother call to him. So he left his work and ran quickly to see what she wanted.

"Charlie, she said, "you must leave your work now, for you have got a visitor."

"What is a visitor, mother?" asked Charlie.

"A visitor is some one who has come to see you," replied his mother. "Your cousin Samuel is in the house. He has come to pass the day with you."

Charlie was much pleased to hear this, and he ran quickly into the house, where he found his cousin with a new kite in his hand.

"Oh, Samuel, what a pretty kite!" said Charlie, "where did you get it?"

"Father made it," replied Samuel. "He made two, one for me and one for you. This one is for you."

"Oh, I am so glad!" said Charlie. "Look, mother, what a beautiful kite.

See its long tail, and this nice ball of string to fly it with."

"Your uncle is very kind," said his mother. "You must remember to ask Samuel to tell him that you thank him very much. It is a fine kite, indeed. Do you think you can fly it?"

"I can, aunt," said Samuel. "Father taught me how to fly mine, and I will teach Charlie how to fly his."

"May we go out into the field next to the garden, and fly it, mother?" asked Charlie.

"His mother gave them leave, and the two little boys ran off very merrily. There was a good breeze, and they had a fine play. The kite flew up in the air like a great bird, but their string was long and strong, and they held it tight, so it could not fly away from them.

Charlie was delighted, and he told Samuel to thank his uncle for the kite, and to tell him that he liked it better than any other of his playthings.

They played in this way for nearly an hour, and then Samuel began to be tired, and he wished Charlie to go into the house with him and show him his other playthings. Samuel had played with his kite a great deal for several days, and it was not quite so new a play to him as it was to Charlie; so he became tired of it sooner.

But Charlie was not willing to go into the house with his cousin.

"The kite is prettier than anything else that I have got," he said. "Do help me fly it again, Samuel."

"Well, I will help you once more," said Samuel, "and then we will go."

But once more did not satisfy Charlie, and he begged his cousin to stay a little longer, and a little longer, until Samuel was quite out of patience, and said he would go home.

"Oh, no, Samuel," said Charlie. "I will go into the house with you in one minute; just wait till I wind up the string."

But Samuel had grown cross and impatient from waiting so long, and now he would not stop an instant, but ran off toward the house. Charlie began to cry, but, just then, he saw his father coming toward them. Samuel saw him also, and he stopped running, and presently he turned and walked back toward the place where Charlie stood.

"Why Charlie," said his father, as he

walked up to them, "I thought I heard you crying. How do you do, Samuel? What a fine kite you have got."

"It is Charlie's kite," said Samuel; "father sent it to him, but he wants to fly it all the time, and I want to play with something else."

"You should be willing to give up to each other," replied Charlie's father. "Charlie should love to make you happy, and you should love to make Charlie happy, and then you will both be happy."

"Yes, father," said Charlie, "that will be the best way; I will play whatever you wish me to after dinner, Samuel."

"And I will help you fly your kite again, before I go home," said Samuel. And now the little boys were good friends

again, and ran merrily along towards the house.

In the afternoon they had a fine time playing with Charlie's soft ball, and building houses with his wooden blocks. When they were tired of play, they seated themselves by Charlie's mother, and asked her to tell them a story.

She said that she could not think of a story just then, but she would talk with them about the new kite.

"Oh, so do, mother," cried Charlie, joyfully. "I should love to hear about my pretty kite."

"Your kite is made of paper," replied his mother. "Can you tell me what paper is made of?"

Charlie said he did not know; but Samuel remembered that his mother had told him that it was made of rags, and

he said that his sister had a bag in which she put all the little bits of cloth and threads that were left when she sewed with her mother, and that when the bag was full she sold the rags to a man who carried them to the paper-mill, where they were made into paper.

Charlie thought this was very strange, and his mother told him that when he was older his father would take him to a paper-mill, and then he would see how paper was made.

"Why do they call it a paper-mill, mother?" asked Charlie. "I thought that corn and grain were ground at mills."

"The rags are ground in a mill also," replied his mother. "They are first washed perfectly clean in hot water, and then ground into a kind of pulp."

with an engine which is made of a round solid piece of wood, with long sharp steel knives fastened to it. This pulp is then made into paper by means of several machines, which I cannot describe to you now. You will understand and remember it much better if your father takes you to the mill and explains it to you there."

"I should like to go to the cotton-factory first, and see how cotton is made into cloth, and then I should like to go to the paper-mill to see how cloth is made into paper," said Charlie. "Only think, Samuel! your kite grew on a pretty plant, that has flowers like my hollyhocks."

"Oh, no," said Samuel. "The kites did not grow. My father made them."

"Charlie means that the paper is made

of cotton, and he remembers that I told him that cotton grows on a plant which has flowers which look like his hollyhocks," replied his aunt, smiling. "The cotton is in large pods, and when it is ripe the pods open, and men and women and children pick it out with their finger. Then it has to be cleaned and carded and spun into thread, and then woven into cloth. It is a very useful plant indeed. You must try to learn all you can about it, for it is right to love to learn about the useful things which the Lord has made."

"There are some other things about the kite besides the paper," said Samuel. "Here is a stick which keeps it in proper shape."

"I know what sticks are made of," said Charlie. "I have seen men cut

down great trees, and saw and split them into sticks."

"There is some paste about the kite," said Samuel. "Father pasted the paper together. I know what paste is made of, for I saw mother mix some flour and water together, and boil it."

"And what is flower made of, Samuel?" asked his aunt.

"Of wheat, aunt," replied Samuel. "Father once showed me a large field of wheat, and he told me how the men thresh out the grain, and then carry it to the mill to be made into flour."

"How many wonderful things there are about my kite!" said Charlie, looking at it with much pleasure. "I will take good care of it. The string is made of hemp. Does hemp grow, mother?"

His mother told him that hemp was a

tall plant, which looked a little like the flax-plant which she had once showed him.

Samuel and Charlie were now ready to play again, and Samuel offered to go to the field and help Charlie fly the kite.

Charlie thanked him, and said he would not tease him to fly it any longer than he wished to.

Both of the little boys were kind and obliging, and therefore they had a very pleasant play.

When it was time for Samuel to go home, Charlie and his mother walked a part of the way with him, and when Samuel bade them good-night, he said he had passed a happy day, and he hoped his aunt would let Charlie make him a visit very soon.

THE WAY TO BE HAPPY.



WONDER what makes little Johnny Mason so happy always," said Willie Green to his mother, as they passed by the cottage where Johnny lived, and heard him singing merrily while at work in his mother's little garden.

"I never saw such a boy as Johnny," continued Willie. "He has to work almost all the time. His father is dead, and his mother is very poor. Johnny has to wear old patched clothes, and I do not think he has very good food. Once I gave him an orange, and he told me that he never ate one, but once before, in his life. Still he always looks so bright and happy. I really think he is happier than I am, with all my books and playthings. What can be the reason, mother?"

"Perhaps it is because he is more useful than you are, Willie," replied Mrs. Green. "We are always happy when we are doing good, and I have often observed that Johnny is always busy trying to do something to help his mother. Sometimes he works for the neighboring farmers, and in this way earns a little money, which helps to buy their food; sometimes he works in their own garden, and raises a few vegetables, and at other times he weaves strong and useful bas-

kets, which he sells for a good price in the village."

"But I cannot do these things, mother," said Willie. "You are not poor, and you do not wish to have me work to earn money, and James takes care of our garden; I do not think he would let me help him. So you see I cannot be useful like Johnny, and therefore I cannot be as happy as he is."

Willie's mother could not help smiling as she looked at his sorrowful countenance and heard him draw a deep sigh as he finished speaking, but she loved her little boy very much, and hastened to try to comfort him.

"There are a great many ways of being useful, Willie," she said. "I think you will find that you can do quite as much good as Johnny, if you try."

"Why, mother," said Willie, "I have to go to school all day, and there I cannot do any good, you know."

"You can learn to do a great deal of good at school," replied his mother.

“The very reason why your father and I are so desirous that you should acquire knowledge, is that you may become a useful man. You will find, as you grow older, that everything you have learned will help you to do good to yourself and others. There are other ways in which you can do good while you are in school. You can help your teacher to keep good order, and you can help the other scholars to be diligent and obedient.”

“How can I do this, mother?” asked Willie. “I do not know what you mean.”

“I will tell you, Willie. When you behave well yourself, study diligently, and are careful to obey all the rules of the school, you help to preserve good order; if every scholar did this, the teacher would have no occasion to reprove or punish them. When the other scholars see how well you behave, some of them will imitate your example, and thus you will not only do right yourself, but you will help others to do so.”

"And how can I do good when I am not in school, mother?" asked Willie.

"Always be very obedient to your parents, and kind to your brothers and sisters, my son. You are older than they, and they look to you for an example. I cannot tell you all the ways in which you may be useful, but if you will try for one day to do all the good you can, I think you will have no reason to complain that there is nothing for you to do."

"Well, mother," said Willie, "I will try. I will begin to-morrow morning. It is so nearly night now, that I do not think I can do any good to-day."

Just as Willie said this they passed by widow Brown's neat cottage, and they saw two large pigs in her garden, rooting up her flowers and vegetables. The old lady was trying to drive them back to their pen, but as she had no one to help her, she did not succeed very well.

Willie ran to her assistance, and the pigs were soon shut up in their sty, and

Willie then nailed a piece of board over the place where they got out, so that they could not escape again.

"It is not very strong, Mrs. Brown," he said, "but I think it will do until your son comes home, and then he can mend it better."

Mrs. Brown thanked him, and said he had been of great use to her; so Willie ran on to overtake his mother, feeling glad that he had done a little good.

Mrs. Green had walked very slowly, and when she turned around and saw Willie running, she stopped until he came up to her.

"Well, Willie," she said, smiling, "the day was not too far gone to prevent your being of some use. Did you get the pigs out of the garden?"

"Yes, mother, they are safely shut up now. I think they will not get out again. But here comes sister Lucy to meet us. What has she got in her hand?"

Lucy was a merry-hearted little girl, about four years old, but now she walked

slowly and sorrowfully along, holding in her hand the remains of a pretty little wagon which had been given to her the day before.

"My new wagon is all broken," she said, as soon as her mother could hear her. "The baby has pulled it all to pieces. I thought he would like it to play with a little while, and so I lent it to him. I did not think he would break it."

"Baby is too young to know any better, Lucy," said her mother. "You must not lend him your pretty play-things until he is older."

"But do not cry, Lucy," said Willie; "let me look at your wagon. Oh Lucy, it is not broken at all; only the pegs are out, and I can soon make new ones. I will make it as good as it was before."

"And will you do it to-night, Willie?" said the little girl, her face brightening as she spoke. "I want to take my doll to ride before breakfast to-morrow morning."

Willie said he would do it directly, and in a very short time Lucy had the pleasure of seeing her little wagon as good as new, and she put her arms around her brother's neck and kissed him, and told him she thanked him. Willie's heart was glad when he went to bed that night, for he had already done two kind actions, and he was resolved to do a great many more the next day. He did not forget to pray to his heavenly Father, and then he fell asleep and slept sweetly until morning.

It was day-light when Willie awoke, but the sun had not risen, so he knew that it must be quite early. He washed and dressed himself carefully, and then he sat down by the window and took his Bible that he might read a few verses before he left his room. His mother had taught him to do this, for, although they always had family worship immediately before breakfast, she thought it better that Willie should acquire the habit of reading in the Word and repeating the Lord's prayer before he left his room in the

morning. Willie read slowly and attentively, and tried to understand the meaning of the words. Then he kneeled and repeated the prayer. Just as he rose from his knees he saw the sun rising from behind a high hill. The window in Willie's room looked toward the east, so he could see the sun rise every morning.

Willie went down stairs to see if breakfast was ready, but Nancy, the cook, told him that she feared it would be a little late that day, for she had accidentally spilled the milk with which she was to have made the cakes for breakfast, and now she must leave her work and go for more.

"I will go for you, Nancy," said Willie, "and you can do something else while I am gone."

"That's a good boy," said Nancy. "It will be a great help to me." So Willie took the pail and ran merrily away. When he returned he found that there would be time for him to study his morning lesson for school, and the run in the

fresh air had made him feel so bright and lively that he learned it very easily.

After breakfast he wished to hasten to school that he might have time to play with the boys before it was time to attend to their lessons; but his mother asked him to give his baby brother a ride in his wagon, and Willie knew that this would be doing good. It was rather hard to give up his own wishes cheerfully, but he tried to do right about it, and very soon he felt happier than he would have done if he had gone to play with the boys. The baby was delighted with the ride, and when Willie threw flowers in his lap he laughed and crowed to show his pleasure.

At school Willie was so attentive to his lessons and so orderly in his conduct, that the teacher said to him, "You are a good boy to-day, Willie. If all my scholars would be so industrious and well-behaved, I should be very much pleased." When the other boys heard what the master said to Willie, they resolved to

follow his example, and at night they had the pleasure of hearing their teacher observe that his school had been a remarkably pleasant and orderly one that day.

Willie remembered what his mother had said, and he thought that perhaps he had been the means of doing a little good to the other scholars.

He had several other opportunities of being useful before the day closed. Once he persuaded some roguish boys not to steal a pretty bird's nest, which they had found, and were about to carry off.—Willie explained to them how wrong and cruel it would be to trouble the harmless little birds, and the boys promised him that they would never steal another.

After school Willie helped Johnny Mason to finish his work in the garden, so that he might have a little time to play with the other boys, and he also told him some useful things which he had learned at school that day, for Johnny loved to learn, although he had not much time to spare.

When Willie went to bed that night, he told his mother that he had passed a happy day, and that he had already found that he could do some good to others.

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MARY MAY.



MARY MAY was a sweet looking child, with blue eyes and bright golden hair. She loved her parents dearly, and they loved her dearly, for she was a very obedient, good little girl. Mary loved to be useful, and when she was only three years old she could do

many things to help her kind mother. She could set the table very neatly, if her mother placed the dishes upon the lower shelf of the closet, so that she could reach them easily ; and she could wipe the dust from the furniture in the parlor, and see that everything was neat and orderly. She loved to sit by the cradle of her baby brother ; and often, when her mother was very busy, Mary would keep the baby asleep for more than an hour, by carefully rocking the cradle every time he stirred.

I taught a small school near to where Mary lived, and she was one of my scholars. I loved to teach her, because she was so willing to learn, and tried to do just as she was told. One morning she came into school an hour later than the

other scholars. She was dressed very neatly in a blue frock and white pantalettes, and a pretty little cape bonnet. She carried a little basket upon her arm, which contained her pocket handkerchief, her patch-work, and a bit of cake pinned up in a piece of paper, for her luncheon. She came up to my desk and said,

“Mother says you will please to excuse me this morning, because she is washing, and I had to take care of the baby.”

Several of the scholars laughed when Mary said this. I suppose they thought she looked too small to take care of a baby. Mary looked grieved, and she said earnestly, “I kept him asleep a long time, and mother said I had done a great deal of good.”

I told Mary that I was pleased to hear that she had helped her mother, and I reminded the scholars that even very little children can be useful if they love to be so.

Then Mary took her book and studied her lesson until she could spell every word in the line I had given her to learn. She also sewed a square of patch-work very neatly, and then I lent her a slate and pencil, and showed her how to make some letters.

After school I told Mary I would walk home with her, and she took hold of my hand and walked quietly by my side. I had a fine peach in my bag, which one of my scholars had given me, and I offered a piece of it to Mary. She looked at it wistfully for a moment, and then

said, "I thank you, but father told me not to eat any fruit to-day, because I am not very well. Perhaps he will give me some to-morrow."

I was glad that Mary remembered to obey her parents when they could not see her. We soon came to the house where she lived, and saw her mother standing at the door ready to receive us. After I had talked with her a few minutes, Mary took me to see her little chickens, and her pretty garden, and her pet lamb. The lamb was named Rosy. She was very tame, and would run to Mary when she called her, and eat from her hand.

"I love to feed my lamb and chickens," said Mary; "and when my little brother is old enough he will love to feed them too. I shall be glad when he learns to walk."

It was time for me to return to the school-house; so I bade Mary good-bye, and she went into the house to her mother.

The next Sabbath I saw Mary at Sabbath school. I think she was the youngest scholar there, but she was very quiet and well-behaved, and she had learned one of the commandments. and an answer in the catechism, to say perfectly. The question which her teacher asked her was this, "Where shall you live after your body dies?" and Mary replied, "I shall live in the spiritual world forever."

Her teacher then told her some things about the little children who live in the spiritual world, and Mary listened very attentively, and said she would tell her mother about them when she went home.

“I am glad that the kind angels take care of them,” she said. “My mother takes good care of me. Do the little children in the spiritual world have lambs and little chickens to feed?”

Her teacher told her that they had lambs, and chickens, and many other beautiful things to play with, and that their hearts were filled with kind and gentle feelings, so that their little plays were always happy and full of love.

“I will try to be good like them,” said Mary. “My mother says that our Heavenly Father made us to be good.”

Her teacher kissed her, and gave her a little book to carry home for her mother to read to her.

This was the last time that little Mary ever went to Sabbath school in this

world. She became very ill not many days after, and in a short time her spirit went to the other world.

It was very pleasant to see how gentle and patient Mary tried to be during her sickness. She would sometimes cry when her pain was very great, but when she saw that this distressed her father and mother, and the other kind friends around her, she would try to smile, and would say, "I shall soon be better, dear mother." She took all the medicine that was given her, and if the kind doctor wished to take hold of her hand, or look at her tongue or throat, she never objected, but did exactly as he told her.

This made it very easy and pleasant to take care of her, and we could feel that the good angels were always near to

her, and were removing her happy little spirit to heaven, as gently as possible.

Sometimes Mary would hold out her hand to her baby brother, and say she wished she could be well enough to play with him again; but when her father asked her if she felt willing to go to the spiritual world if her Heavenly Father thought it best, she smiled sweetly, and said she should love to be with the good little children in heaven.

One day, when I was sitting by her bed, while her mother took a little rest, she slept quietly for nearly an hour, and I could see that her dreams were pleasant, and that she was free from pain, for she smiled pleasantly, and her whole countenance looked very happy.

When she awoke she told me that she
• had seen some of the beautiful angels,

and that they had told her that she would soon live with them in the spiritual world, and that they had taken her to a garden where there were a great many little children playing happily among the trees and flowers, and she had gathered some of the bright flowers, and listened to the music of the pretty birds that were flying around them. "They were not like our birds," said Mary, "for their feathers shone like gold and silver; and they were so tame that if we stretched out our hands they would perch upon them, and sing the sweetest songs."

Not many hours after this Mary grew worse, and for a little while she suffered a good deal of pain. Then she became easier again, but her breath grew shorter and shorter; and if she spoke, her voice was so low that we had to listen very

attentively to hear what she said. We knew that she was then going to the other world, and we tried to feel willing that the Lord should do what he saw to be best for her and for us.

Even Mary's mother, although she felt that it was hard to part with her dear little girl, was quite calm and cheerful, and could return the smile with which Mary sometimes looked in her face.

Her sufferings were all over; and when she died it seemed as if she had fallen asleep in her mother's arms, and was again dreaming of heaven.

We love to think of little Mary. We love to remember how obedient and useful she tried to be during her short life in this world; and we love to think of her peaceful death, and how good and happy she now is in heaven.

I hope that all the little children who read this story will try to be like good little MARY MAY.

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I FORGOT.



H, brother Frank, I am so glad you have come!" exclaimed little Mary Smith, as she ran eagerly to meet her brother, who was just returning from a walk in the fields with his father. "I want my little wagon, that you said you would mend for me. Cousin Susan has come to see me, and we want to take our Dolly to ride."

"Oh, Mary, I forgot all about your

wagon ! I have not mended it yet," replied Frank.

Mary looked very sorrowful, and as she walked away she said, "You *promised* to mend it yesterday, Frank, and it is wicked to break promises. Now you have spoiled our play."

"It is not wicked to break promises in that way, is it, father?" asked Frank.

"In what way, Frank?" replied Mr. Smith.

"Why, I should have mended the wagon yesterday, if I had remembered it. It is not wrong to *forget* to do things that we have promised?"

"I think it is very wrong, Frank. Forgetfulness is almost always caused by selfishness. We think more of our own comfort and pleasure than we do of that of others, and so we forget to do any act of kindness which we have promised to them. If your kite, or ball, or any of your own playthings, had been out of order, do you think you would have forgotten to repair them?"

Frank said he did not think he should ; but still he did not think it very wrong to forget. It was not so bad as to break promises on purpose.

"No," said his father, "it is not so bad

as to do that, but the habit of forgetting what we ought to do for others is a very evil one, and leads to many great sins. It is a very poor excuse for any fault to say, 'I forgot to do right.' We should not make promises in a hasty or careless manner, and without really caring whether we keep them or not. When we do this, we not only say what is not true, but we often deprive others of much comfort and pleasure; and thus we break the commandment which says, 'Thou shalt not steal.' "

"Oh, father!" exclaimed Frank, "I never break that commandment. I know some boys who rob orchards and gardens, and once they tried to persuade me to go with them; but I told them it was very wicked, and I would not go."

"No, Frank, you never steal fruit from an orchard, but those two words, 'I forgot,' often cause you to take from others what they value as much as fruit. For instance: you have deprived Mary and Susan of the pleasure they expected from playing with the little wagon. I could mention several other cases where you have often taken what belonged to others; but if you really wish to cure yourself of this bad fault, you will easily

remember them yourself, and will learn to avoid them in future."

Frank was very thoughtful for a few minutes, and then he said: —

"I believe I understand what you mean now, father; and I can see that there are many ways of stealing, which I never thought of before, and that I break the commandment as well as others, although in a different way."

"You will find, my son, that, as you try to shun the ways of breaking it, of which you have now thought, there are also many other ways; and if you persevere, the Lord will enable you to understand and keep the commandment more and more perfectly every day."

"I will try, father," said Frank; "and now I will go and mend Mary's wagon. I think it will not take me long, and she may still have some time to play with it before Susan goes home."

In about half an hour the wagon was completed, and was received with much joy by Mary and her cousin, while Frank went to his play, glad that he had fulfilled one promise, and with many good resolutions for his future conduct.

But Frank's habit of forgetfulness had been gaining strength for several years,

and it could not be removed without many trials, and some sad lessons.

One cold, frosty morning in December, as Frank was putting on his warm coat and cap, and preparing for school, his mother said to him, —

“Frank, can I trust you to take this dollar to poor Mrs. Reed? I was told yesterday that she was very much in want, and I intended to call and see her to-day, but do not feel well enough. Tell her that I will try to see her to-morrow; and ask if there is anything, which this dollar will not buy, which she particularly needs to-day.”

“Oh, yes, mother, you can trust me!” replied Frank, cheerfully. “I do not often forget now. I know I do sometimes,” he added, as he watched the expression of his mother’s face, “but not so often as I used to.”

“You have certainly improved, Frank, but still you cannot be too watchful of yourself. Now take your books and hasten along, my son, for it is nearly school-time.”

Frank had not gone many steps from his father’s door, when he was overtaken by William Jones, one of his school-fellows.

"Come, Frank," said William, "let us run as fast as we can, that we may have a little time for play before school. I have been to the school-house once this morning, and the pond near there is frozen very hard, and the boys are having fine sport. I ran home for my skates, for I did not think of bringing them the first time; but I see you have yours slung over your shoulder."

"Yes," replied Frank; "my father said he thought there must be good skating this morning. I hope the bell will not ring until we have been round the pond once or twice; make haste, William;" and both the boys set off for a race, forgetting everything but the pleasant prospect of skating for the first time that winter.

They reached the pond in time for a few minutes' sport, and, when the bell rung for school, took their seats with cheeks glowing with exercise, and almost panting for breath.

Frank was a good scholar, and had many difficult lessons to learn. His whole attention was soon engrossed by his studies, and Mrs. Reed and the dollar, which he had carefully placed in the pocket of his vest, were entirely forgotten.

The intermission of an hour at noon was spent on the pond too pleasantly to allow him to remember to eat his own dinner, which his mother had put in his little basket; he could not, therefore, be expected then to remember the hungry family whom he was to have relieved. Night came, and, with the dollar still in his pocket, he returned from school, and gladly took his place at the tea-table.

"This has been a bitter cold day," said Mr. Smith, as he filled Frank's plate. "I wish, my son, that all the poor children had as good a supper, and as warm a fire, as you have got."

"I wish so too, father," said Frank. "Are you not going to a meeting for the relief of the poor this evening?"

"I am, Frank; and it is quite time that there was something done for their relief, for there is much suffering, even in our own immediate neighborhood. I heard of one poor family who were turned out of their home this cold day, by the unfeeling landlord, because they could not pay their month's rent. The father died with cholera last summer, and the mother had been prevented from working as steadily as usual for their support, by the illness of one of her children, who

will probably lose its life by the exposure of to-day. I shall seek them out this evening, and see what I can do for their relief. You remember Mrs. Reed," he continued, addressing his wife. "I am speaking of her. The landlord has actually turned her and her poor children into the street."

"Turned them into the street!" exclaimed Mrs. Smith. "My dear Frank, did you take the money there, as I requested, this morning, and inquire if there was anything else needed for their immediate relief?"

"Oh, mother," said Frank, dropping his knife and fork, and bursting into tears, "I forgot!"

No one spoke for a few minutes, for Frank's parents did not wish to add to his distress. His little sister placed her hand affectionately in his, and whispered, — "Don't cry, dear Frank;" but this act of kindness only made the tears flow still faster.

At length his father said: —

"It is a sad lesson, my son; but it may help to teach you the evil of this selfish forgetfulness. If you had done as your mother requested, you would have discovered the situation of this poor fam-

ily, and I would gladly have paid the trifling debt for them, and thus saved them from much suffering."

"I am very sorry that I did not ask you to call instead of Frank," said Mrs. Smith; "but you left home so early this morning, and were so much occupied with your business, that I did not wish to trouble you. I intended to speak to you on the subject this evening."

"I will find them immediately after tea," replied her husband; "probably they have not gone far. You may accompany me, Frank. Your assistance may be useful."

Frank dried his tears, and endeavored to eat his supper, but the food seemed to choke him, as he thought of the destitute family.

A few inquiries enabled them to find the place where Mrs. Reed had been obliged to seek shelter. It was one of the poorest rooms in a miserably built house, for she could give little security for the rent, and few were willing to risk the loss of even the trifling sum which would be due at the end of a month. On a bed in one corner of the room lay the sick child, her head resting on the bosom of the poor mother. Three other children were en-

deavoring to make a little fire of a few cinders and shavings.

Frank's heart ached, and the tears again started to his eyes, as he looked on the sad scene; but he remembered that his father had said that he might be useful, and while Mr. Smith stood by the bedside and talked with Mrs. Reed, he tried to help the children make the fire, and gave them plenty of food from a large basket which his mother had filled with provisions for them. The hungry little ones almost forgot the cold, in their joy at the sight of the food, and, while they were eating, Frank ran to a carpenter's shop, which he had seen near by, and returned with some chips and blocks, which he threw upon the fire, and soon made a cheerful blaze.

After Mr. Smith had made the poor family as comfortable as possible for the night, he left them, promising to return at an early hour the next morning.

"I will walk home with you, before going to the meeting, Frank," said he, as they closed the street door, "for it is still quite early in the evening."

Frank walked in silence by his father's side for a few minutes. At length he said : —

"Do you think that sick child is any worse from exposure to the cold air to-day, father?"

"From what I have seen of her this evening, Frank, I think that she would have died before many weeks, if they had not been obliged to move; but no doubt her sufferings have been increased to-day by exposure. We must now try to do all we can for their relief."

"I thought I was almost cured of forgetfulness, father," said Frank, "and I told mother so this morning, when she trusted me with that dollar; but I was mistaken. I can now see very plainly the truth of what you once told me, that forgetfulness is generally caused by selfishness. If I had thought as much of poor Mrs. Reed as I did of my play with the boys on the pond, I should have saved her much grief and trouble. And I can also see, father, how this selfishness leads me to break the commandment, 'Thou shalt not steal,' although I refused to join the boys who wished me to help them rob an orchard. I have deprived this poor family of many comforts by my carelessness. I am afraid I shall never learn to be good," and Frank's voice trembled so much that he could hardly speak.

“Do not despair, my son,” said Mr Smith encouragingly. “Within the last few weeks you have done much toward overcoming this bad habit; and although the lesson of to-day has been a sad one, and shows you that constant watchfulness is still necessary, you must not feel discouraged. Gratefully acknowledge what the Lord has already done for you, and never neglect to look to Him for help to enable you to overcome this and all other evils.”

The kind and encouraging manner in which his father spoke made Frank feel more cheerful; and, when he kneeled by his bedside that night, he prayed more earnestly than ever before for strength to put away all selfishness.

Our little book is too small to allow us to tell our young readers any more of Frank's trials, but they will be glad to learn that he persevered until he had so entirely overcome his bad habit, that the words “I forgot” were seldom used by him; and, as he grew to manhood, he was remarkable for his kind thoughtfulness, and attention to the wants of others.

THE HAPPY CHRISTMAS.



N one week more, it will be Christmas," said Henry Allen to his brothers and sisters, as the merry little party assembled in the play-room, when their lessons were all said for the day, and they had leave to amuse themselves as they liked.

“One week more!” repeated several happy voices. “Oh how merry we shall be! We shall have such pretty presents, and such a pleasant party of boys and girls!”

“Mother said we were to have a new kind of a party this year,” continued Emily, Henry’s oldest sister. “I wonder what she meant. Perhaps she will tell us now, as Christmas will so soon be here.”

Just as Emily finished speaking, their mother came into the room, and the children gathered around her, and begged to know who were to be invited to their Christmas party.

“I have come to talk with you about Christmas, my dear children,” said Mrs. Allen. “Some of you are now old enough to know why we celebrate this day, and to learn to celebrate it in a proper manner.

“A long time ago the men of this

world became so wicked that they did not know how to serve the Lord. Nearly all of them thought that there were a great many gods. Some supposed that these gods were good beings, and others that they were evil. Some of them worshipped the sun, some the moon, and some the great men who had lived and died in this world. Others thought that the gods lived in certain animals, such as lions, oxen, and many others; and so they worshipped these animals. Others made images of wood or stone, in the shape of men, and worshipped these. Thus, almost every person in the world worshipped some false god, and was ignorant of the true God. Even the Jews, who had the Word of the Lord which is contained in the Old Testament, were as ignorant and wicked as any people in the world. What a dreadful state of the world it was, when men had become ignorant of the Lord God, who made

heaven and earth, and were so wicked that they worshipped birds and beasts, and images made with their own hands !

“About that time, the Lord came into the world. He appeared as a man, and spake and acted as a man, except that all He said and did was full of wisdom and goodness. He lived in the world about thirty-two years ; but we have not much account of what He did, except during the last two years. But we know that He came into the world to save men from their sins ; and all that is written of Him shows that He spent His whole time in doing good. He preached to the people that they should repent of their sins. He explained to them how they should repent, and promised to give them power to overcome evil, if they would trust in Him and keep His commandments. The Jews would not believe that He was their Lord and Redeemer. They despised Him and persecuted Him. But when they did

evil to Him, He did good to them. He taught them how they ought to live; and He showed them by His own example how to avoid all sin, and do all things according to His commandments.

“I might tell you a great deal more of what the Lord did and is constantly doing for us, but you are anxious to hear about Christmas. This is the day that the Lord was born into this world, and this is why we celebrate it, or keep it differently from what we do other days. Now how should you think that such a day ought to be kept? Remember that the Lord came into the world to save men from their sins, and to do them all the good that He could.”

“Then I should think, mother,” said Henry, “that every one ought to try to do as much good as possible on Christmas day. That would be the best way to celebrate it.”

“I am glad to hear you say this, my

son," replied Mrs. Allen. "That is the way in which I think Christmas ought to be celebrated. It may not be in our power to save people from their sins, as the Lord did, but we can do our best to help those who are in external poverty and want, and we can try hard to put away our own evils, and then every Christmas day will find us better able to do good to others."

"And now will you tell us what kind of a party we are to have, and what pretty presents you will give us?" asked Mary, one of the younger children, who could not understand all that her mother had said, but had waited patiently until she had done talking.

Mrs. Allen smiled. "I cannot tell what presents I shall make you, dear Mary," she said, "but I will try to have some little gift for each one. As to the party, your father and I intend to invite all the poor children whom we know in

the neighborhood to meet here on Christmas eve, or, rather, on the afternoon before Christmas, and we shall prepare a little feast for them, and also give them some comfortable things to take home, to make them and their parents happy on the next day."

"Oh, that will be very pleasant, mother!" exclaimed Emily. "We have saved a good deal of money, in our box, for the poor, and if you and father will please to give us what you intended to spend for our Christmas presents, we shall be able to buy some of the poor children some winter clothing. I am sure that all we older ones will be willing to go without any presents, for the sake of helping the poor. The little ones may hang up their stockings and have them filled."

"Your father and I will be much pleased to add to what you have saved for the poor, dear Emily, if you think that you and your older brother and

sister will be contented without your usual gifts. We are not rich, and we have not a great deal to spend in this way; but almost every one can do something to help those who are poorer than they are, if they are willing to deny themselves."

Henry and Isabel consented very readily to Emily's plan, and little Willie and Mary, although they did not feel quite willing to give up *all* their Christmas presents, told their mother that she need not fill their stockings more than half full, and then she would have more money for the poor.

The next week was a busy one. The money which the children had been saving for several months, and a few dollars which their parents added to it, was spent for various useful articles of clothing, and Emily and Isabel passed almost all their play-time in helping their mother make warm and comfortable garments, suitable

for the children whom they intended to invite to the little party.

“I find that there are not more than twelve really poor children in our immediate neighborhood,” said Mr. Allen, as he came into the room where his wife and children were sitting, two or three days before Christmas, “and these will be as many as it will be well for us to invite. If others will do the same, all the poor in our village may have a happy Christmas. Here is a list of their names;” and he drew a paper from his pocket, and began to read aloud.

The children listened quietly until he read the last name, when Henry exclaimed —

“O, father, you surely do not mean to invite Tom White! Why, he is the boy that we caught robbing our orchard, last fall.”

“I know that, Henry, but still we will try to do him good. Remember that this

is a *Christmas party*, and that Christmas was the day on which the Lord came into the world to save men from their sins. He does not cast us off when we do evil, but tries to lead us to repent and become better. Let us do the same to Tom White."

Henry felt the truth of what his father said, and made no further objections to Tom's being invited; and all the children now began to talk of the party, and of the nice presents they had prepared for their visitors.

The long-wished-for day at length arrived, and the poor children, looking as neat and clean as their parents could make them, assembled in Mr. Allen's pleasant parlor. Henry and Emily and Isabel took every pains to make them happy, and Mary and Willie brought their prettiest toys to show to the youngest of the little company. They soon felt quite at home, and seemed filled with

wonder and delight at everything around them.

Mrs. Allen joined in all their plays, and also played them many pretty tunes on the piano, which pleased them very much; and Mr. Allen came into the room for an hour or two, and talked so kindly and pleasantly with all of the children, that they were quite sorry when he went away.

Then came the nice supper of bread and butter and cakes and fruit, and after this the presents of clothing and books, and a few toys were distributed among the happy party.

It would have pleased you to have heard the joyful tones of their voices, when they bade their kind friends good-night; and if you could have followed them to their homes, and seen the thankfulness of the poor mothers, as they looked at the useful presents which the children had received, and unpacked the large

baskets of provisions which Mrs. Allen had sent home with each child, you would have felt, as Emily and her brother and sister did, that you would willingly go without Christmas toys, for the sake of giving so much happiness to the poor and needy.

Christmas day was bright and clear, and Mr. Allen's children were delighted, when their father told them that they were all to dine with their kind grandfather, who lived about twelve miles from their house. They had a happy time; and all agreed, when they returned at night, that this had been the most joyful Christmas they had ever passed; for the knowledge that we have done good to others always fills our own hearts with happiness.

DOING GOOD AT PLAY.



OW, mother, I have learned all my lessons, and there is still an hour left before school," said Arthur Graham. "May I go and play on the green with the other boys?"

"Yes, Arthur," replied Mrs. Graham, "you may go for a little while. Be careful to come

home in time to prepare for school, and try to do all the good you can while you are at play."

"How can I do good at play, mother? I shall drive my hoop, or play ball; but that will not do any one good, excepting that it will make my cheeks rosy to run in the fresh air."

"If you really wish to do good, Arthur, you will find opportunities even while at play. Keep the good angels around you, and they will help you."

"I will try, mother," said Arthur; and he kissed his mother, and ran merrily away to join several of his school-fellows who were at play on the little green which was nearly in front of his father's house.

"Oh, there is Arthur!" shouted several of the boys, as they saw him running towards them. "Now we can have a grand play if he has brought his new ball."

"Yes, here it is," said Arthur, and he took his new ball from his pocket, and tossed it toward one of the boys, who stood with a bat in his hand. For a little while they played happily and kindly together; but then a dispute arose as to which party had won the most games. Some of the boys felt very cross and angry, and called each other by unkind names.

Arthur remembered what his mother had said about doing good, and he tried to persuade them to go on with their play.

"It is no matter who wins the most games," he said. "Let us play for the fun of it, and not care which side beats."

"Oh, yes, you say that, because you know our side has won the most!" said John White, a cross, surly boy, who stood nearly opposite to Arthur. "I will not play any more with such cheating fel-

lows;" and, as he spoke, he tossed Arthur's new ball, which he held in his hand, far over the little enclosure, and it rolled down a steep bank into a stream of water at a little distance from the playground.

"Oh, for shame, John!" exclaimed several voices; and they ran toward the water, and tried to catch the ball, but it went rapidly down the stream, and was soon out of sight.

Arthur felt very sorry, and very angry also, and at first he raised a stick, which he had in his hand, to strike John; but the good angels seemed to whisper to him that this would be wrong, and he hearkened to their voice, and dropped the stick. Bad words also came into his mind, but he did not speak them, and presently his angry feelings went away, and he said, kindly, —

"I do not think that John meant to toss my ball into the stream. Perhaps

we shall be able to find it after school; but if we stop any longer now, we shall be late."

"He did mean to throw it in, Arthur," said two or three of the most quarrelsome of the boys; "and we will help you to punish him as he deserves, if you like."

"But I do not like," replied Arthur. "Let cats and dogs do all the fighting. Boys know better, and should do better."

Arthur then ran home to get his books and prepare for school, and most of the boys followed his example.

John White felt sorry and ashamed when he saw how kindly Arthur treated him, and, as soon as the other boys were out of sight, he ran along the banks of the stream and searched carefully for the ball. The water was not very deep, and it was so clear that he could see the bottom. At length he found the ball entangled in some bushes and stones, which

had been thrown into the lower part of the stream. He took it out and dried it carefully, and, putting it in his pocket, hastened to school. His teacher was surprised to see John come in so late, for, although he was not a very kind, pleasant boy, he was a good scholar, and very punctual. He now took his seat, and studied so diligently that his morning lessons were all well recited, and he was allowed to join the other boys at recess, though he had been so tardy.

As soon as they left the school-house, John went to Arthur and gave him the ball, saying, —

“Here is your ball, Arthur. I am sorry that I threw it into the brook.”

“Oh, thank you for finding it!” said Arthur. “It is not hurt at all.” And he joyfully put it into his pocket.

“I am glad that I did not quarrel with John this morning,” thought he.

“It did me good to put away my angry

feelings, and I think it did him good, too. Mother will be glad that I listened to the angels, and suffered them to lead me aright."

In the course of the day, Arthur had several opportunities of doing good at play.

Among his school-fellows was one whose parents were poor, and had to work very hard to support a very large family. They wished to give their son a good education, and were willing to work still harder for the sake of keeping him at a good school a part of the year. William Morris, for that was his name, was a bright, pleasant boy, and a good scholar. He loved his kind parents, and, when they gave him leave to attend school for a few weeks, he tried to learn as much as possible, that he might be able to teach his younger brothers and sisters.

But I am sorry to say that William's schoolmates were not always very kind to

him. They sometimes laughed at his old hat and his patched clothes, and, although he was always perfectly neat and clean, some of the better dressed boys would sometimes refuse to play with him, and would grieve him by calling him foolish names.

On the day of which we are speaking, a large party of the boys were having a merry play with their balls and kites, when they saw William coming towards them. Some of the most thoughtless among them called out, —

“Oh, here comes the old clothes man !”

William looked very much grieved, and, turning sadly away, walked to the other end of the play-ground.

Arthur felt sorry for him. He remembered that we are taught, in the word of the Lord, to do unto others as we would have them do to us, and he said to the other boys, —

“If our parents were poor and could

not buy us new clothes, we should not like to be laughed at and called names. Let us call William, and ask him to play with us.”

The boys made no objection, for they felt that what Arthur said was true; so Arthur ran up to William and said, kindly, —

“Come, William, we want you to play ball with us. No one will laugh at you any more. We know that it is very wrong.”

William had been taught by his parents that he should always forgive those who injured him in any way, and not feel unkindly towards them, or try to do them any evil; so he dried the tears which had fallen on his cheeks, and, thanking Arthur, joined merrily in the play.

They had a very happy time, and, when the bell called them to take their seats in the school-house, they all felt

much happier than if they had persisted in their unkind treatment of William; and Arthur did not forget to thank the Lord, who had helped him to listen to the teachings of the good angels around him, and to do good even when he was at play.

After school, at night, Arthur also found many ways of doing good at play. His mother gave him leave to take his little sisters into the garden. They were always happy to go with their brother, for he was very kind to them, and they loved him very much; but this afternoon they enjoyed their walk even more than usual; for Arthur told them so many pretty stories about the birds and flowers, and the honey-bees, that their little hearts were filled with happiness, and they ran frisking about as merrily as the little lambs that were sporting in the meadow.

When it was time to go into the house they had a great deal to tell their mother,

about the different ways in which the birds build their nests, and about the industrious bees who work so busily to fill their waxen comb.

Their mother smiled, and said to Arthur, —

“Have you found any way of doing good at play, my son?”

“Oh, yes, mother!” replied Arthur. “I have remembered what you said to me this morning, and I find that when I keep the angels around me, I can do a great deal of good.”

Then he told his mother about his new ball, and about William Morris, and some other ways in which he thought he had done good during the day.

His mother felt very happy to think that he had listened to the voice of the angels, and had put away unkind feelings when they came into his heart, and had tried to help others to do right; and when she kissed him, and bade him

good night, she told him to remember to thank the Lord, who had watched over him and kept him from evil through the day.

“Yes, mother,” replied Arthur; “I will remember this, and I will ask him to help me to be a better boy to-morrow; for you know I did raise my hand to strike John, although I did not really do it.”

Arthur was soon sleeping sweetly in his little bed, and his dreams were pleasant; for when we keep the angels around us through the day, they are always near to guard us in the night.

TRY AGAIN.



H dear! I can never wind this skein of thread!" exclaimed little Susan Morris. "Please, mother, give me the scissors, to cut it; it is so tangled that it cannot be wound."

"I think it can, Susan," replied her

mother. "It is not a very smooth skein, I know; but if you are patient, you will soon be able to wind it neatly on the spool, and it will be much more convenient than to have it cut."

"But, indeed, mother, I have tried my best, and I cannot get this snarl out;" and, as Susan spoke, she gave the thread an impatient pull, and broke it.

Her mother looked at her, and saw that her face looked red and cross, and she knew that there were evil spirits around her, who were trying to make her do wrong, and she pitied her little girl, and wished to help her. So she said —

"Come with me into the garden, Susan. I am going to gather some flowers,

to fill the vases. Leave the thread until you come back."

Susan obeyed, and was soon running very happily along the pleasant walks, and looking at the beautiful flowers.

Presently she saw a little wren flying about the pretty wren-house which her father had placed on the top of an arbor in the garden. The wren had some straw in her bill, and Susan thought she must be building a nest. She was much pleased, and called her mother to come and see.

Mrs. Morris came and stood near Susan, and they watched the bird for some minutes. She did not appear to be afraid of them, and would hop quite close to their feet, to pick up straws and little sticks, to

weave into her nest. Once she tried to fly to the arbor with a long twig, that was too heavy for such a little bird to carry, and, before she had quite reached the wren-house, it dropped upon the ground. The little bird did not appear to be discouraged, but patiently picked it up, and tried again. This she did several times, and after four or five trials she succeeded in carrying it to the nest.

“What a patient little bird!” said Mrs. Morris; and Susan thought so, too, but she did not say anything about it then, for she thought of the skein of thread, and felt a little ashamed that she had not been as patient as the wren. Just then she saw a beautiful humming-bird flying from flower to flower, and sucking the

sweet honey for his breakfast. Susan was delighted with the shining green feathers on his back, and the beautiful red ones on his neck, and she stood looking at it for some time. She was also much pleased with watching a large spider, that was spinning her curious web in one corner of the arbor. It was indeed quite wonderful to see her draw out one long thread after another, and then fasten them together so neatly and carefully. Presently the little humming-bird flew against the web, and brushed it away with his buzzing wings.

Susan felt sorry for the spider, and watched to see what she would do. For a minute or two the poor thing was very quiet, and seemed to be quite frightened

and discouraged ; but very soon she went to another part of the arbor, and began patiently to weave a new web.

“The spider is as patient as the wren,” thought Susan, and again she remembered the skein of thread.

Her mother now called her to watch the honey-bees, which were so industriously working among the flowers ; and she told her how skilfully they built their waxen cells, and labored day after day to fill them with sweet honey ; and, when men go to their hives and take away a part of the nice honey-comb, how patiently they go to work and replace that which they have lost.

Susan liked honey, and she was very

much interested in what her mother told her about the industrious little bees.

They now returned to the house ; and after Mrs. Morris had arranged the flowers in the vases, she sat down to her sewing.

She was pleased to see that Susan returned to the skein of thread with a cheerful countenance, and worked over it very patiently, until it was neatly wound upon the spool.

Then she felt very happy, and said, as she placed it in her mother's work-basket,

“The bird, and the spider, and the honey-bees, have taught me a good lesson to-day, mother ; I will try to be more patient another time. I will learn to

‘Try, try again,’ as father often tells me to do. But, mother, was it not very strange that I should see so many things in the garden to remind me how impatient and naughty I had been about the thread?”

“No, my dear,” replied her mother, “I do not think it strange. The Lord keeps kind angels around you, who are always trying to do you good, and to help you put away all evil thoughts and feelings. When I took you into the garden, I knew that evil spirits had come near to you, and that the good angels wished to help you to put them away, and I prayed to the Lord to show me how to do you good. When you were in

the garden you felt pleasant and happy, and the angels led you to look at the little wren and the spider, and helped me to tell you about the bees; and thus the evil spirits were driven away, and you returned to your work, and patiently *tried again*, and soon all your trouble was over."

"When I feel impatient and naughty again," said Susan, "I will try to remember that evil spirits are near me, and I will pray to the Lord to help me put them away, and to send His kind angels to take care of me, and make me a good girl."

"That will be right, my dear child," replied her mother, and she kissed Susan,

and told her she might go and play until dinner-time.

I love to watch the little bird,
As patiently she weaves
Her pretty nest upon the tree,
Half hid among the leaves.

I love to watch the honey-bee
Upon the fragrant flowers,
And see how busily she works
Through the long summer hours.

I love to watch the squirrels, too,
Gathering their winter store ;
Each nut with care they hide away,
And then return for more.

I love to watch the busy ants,
As, creeping on the ground,

With joy they carry to their house
Some treasure they have found.

I love to watch the spider spin,
With so much skill and care,
Her curious web, where every thread
Is finer than a hair.

Bird, bee and squirrel, spider too,
This lesson teacheth me,
To try each duty to perform
With patient industry.

If what I have to do seems hard,
I must not fret or cry,
And say it never can be done,
But still with patience *try*.

The angels kind are ever near,
To guard me day and night ;
And if I 'm patient, kind and good,
They 'll help me do what 's right.

Our heavenly Father always hears,
When earnestly we pray ;
And daily will I ask for strength
To shun each evil way.

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WORKS OF LOVE.



"Who is that little girl, Lucy, who walks on the other side of the street, at a distance

from her schoolmates?" asked Mrs. Meredith, as her little daughter left the merry group with whom she was returning from school, and ran to her mother, who stood at the open door, awaiting her.

"O, that is Emily Graham," replied Lucy. "She is not a good girl, mother; and we never play with her, or say anything to her. That is the reason she does not walk with us."

"I am sorry she is not a good girl," said Mrs. Meredith, gravely; "but are you sure that this is the best way to make her better?"

"To make her better, mother?" repeated Lucy, looking somewhat perplexed. "We do not keep away from her to make her better, but because we know she is naughty, and we do not like to play with naughty girls."

"But is this right, Lucy? We all do wrong, very often, but our Heavenly Father does not treat us in this manner. He draws near to us, and endeavors to lead us

to repentance. He is kind to the evil and unthankful, and never wearies of trying to make them good and happy."

"I do not think I could do Emily any good," answered Lucy; "and, besides, mother, you do not know how very wicked she has been."

Here Lucy lowered her voice, and added, in a whisper, "She has broken one of the commandments, mother. She stole a little knife from the teacher's desk."

"That was a great sin," said her mother, quietly; "but there are many ways of breaking that commandment. I have little doubt that both you and your young companions sometimes take what is not your own, although you would think it very wrong to take anything from the teacher's desk. Are you never so idle and inattentive to your lessons, that your teacher is obliged to take the time which should be devoted to others, to try to explain them to you, and bring you to a sense of your duty?"

"Sometimes, mother, — not often."

"And did you ever think that this is stealing time which properly belongs to others, and depriving them of the knowledge which they would gain in that time?"

"No, mother; I never thought of that."

"This is one way of breaking the commandment, 'Thou shalt not steal.' There are many other ways, but I am not going to tell you about them now. I want to talk with you about the right way of treating those who have done wrong. How should you treat Emily, if she were ill?"

"As kindly as I could, mother. I would do everything I could to make her well again."

"That is right, my child. I knew you would feel so; and this is exactly the way I wish you to feel towards her, now that she is spiritually sick. There are diseases of the soul, as well as diseases of the body; and we should labor as earnestly to cure the former as the latter, both in ourselves and our neighbors."

Lucy was a sensible, thoughtful child; and she fully understood what her mother was saying, and she felt the truth of it very deeply.

“I will try to love Emily, and do her good, dear mother,” she said. “I know that I do wrong myself very often, and I am sure that it would not make me any better if all my friends should treat me as I have treated Emily.”

“Indeed, it would not, dear Lucy; and if the Lord and His angels should treat us in this manner, we should soon become wholly evil, for none but evil spirits would draw near to us.”

Lucy's younger brothers and sisters now gathered around her, and her mother went into another room; but Lucy did not forget the new truths she had learned. She treasured them in her heart, and resolved to bring them into action on the first opportunity.

She did not have to wait long. Not more than an hour or two after her return,

she heard one of her little brothers crying sadly. At first, she thought he was hurt, and ran quickly to ask what was the matter. She soon found, however, that his sobs were those of passion, and not of grief. He had been mischievous and troublesome in his mother's room, and she had directed him to go down stairs and stay in the sitting-room until she came to him. He was unwilling to do this; and, when she insisted upon obedience, he felt very angry, and screamed violently.

Lucy spoke to him gently, but he repulsed her with great rudeness. This irritated her a little, and at any other time she would have left him at once, saying, perhaps, that she would have nothing to do with such a cross boy.

But her mother's instructions were fresh in her mind. She saw that Willie was spiritually sick; and she pitied him, and persevered in her efforts to make him better.

"Do not cry so loud, dear Willie," she

said; "you will disturb the baby. Try to put away the evil feelings in your mind; and then the kind angels will come round you, and you will be happy again."

But Willie was not in a state to profit by what Lucy said. He continued to cry as loudly as ever; and when his sister laid her hand upon him, he tried to strike her. Poor Lucy felt quite at a loss how to proceed; but she remembered that her mother had often told her to look to the Lord for help, when she was in any difficulty. So she repeated the prayer to her Heavenly Father, and in a moment she saw what was best for her to do. She said no more to Willie about his bad behavior, but kindly offered to show him her dissected maps, which he was not often allowed to have, and which she knew would be pleasing to him. In a few minutes his attention became engaged, and he grew quiet and pleasant. Lucy continued to amuse him in various ways, until he appeared to have quite forgotten his troubles. When she

saw that he was quite happy again, she talked to him very gently about being so naughty; and now he listened patiently, and appeared to be sorry for his fault. Then Lucy proposed that he should go and tell his mother that he was sorry; and Willie consented, provided she would go with him.

His mother kissed him affectionately; and when he told her that sister Lucy had brought the angels round him, and made him a good boy, she smiled approvingly upon Lucy, and said,

“You have done well, my daughter. These are works of love in which the angels delight; and they rejoice when they find those upon earth who are willing to assist them in their heavenly work.”

Lucy felt very happy. It was so delightful to think that she had helped the angels to bring good thoughts and feelings into her little brother's heart!

Her sleep was sweet, that night; and, in her dreams, she saw the heavenly beings

who surrounded her, and learned of them new lessons in doing good to others. Lucy went to school rather earlier than usual, the next morning, and there was no one in the school-room but Emily Graham. She bade her good-morning very pleasantly. Emily looked surprised; for her school-mates had seldom spoken to her, of late. The tears came to her eyes, as she returned Lucy's salutation. Lucy saw this, and she felt great pity for her.

"Have you learned your morning lesson in arithmetic, Emily?" she asked. "It is more difficult than usual."

"I cannot understand it very well," replied Emily, "and there is no one at home to help me. Father is so much engaged in his business that I seldom see him, and my old nurse does not understand arithmetic."

Then Lucy remembered that Emily's mother had died several years before, and she said to herself,

"No wonder that poor Emily sometimes

does things which are very wrong. If I had not my kind mother to watch over me, I fear I should become a very naughty girl."

Then she opened her arithmetic, and seating herself by Emily, she explained the most difficult parts of the lesson.

While she was doing this, several of the scholars entered; and they were surprised, and somewhat vexed, to see how Lucy was employed.

"How can you talk to a thief?" whispered one rude girl, in so loud a tone that Emily overheard her. She blushed deeply, and the tears rolled down her cheeks; but she turned away from Lucy, and walked to her own desk.

"You should not speak so, Caroline," said Lucy, gently, turning to the girl who had made the unfeeling remark. "It is true that Emily has done wrong once; but she is sorry for it now, and we must be kind to her, and try to do her good."

Some of the scholars laughed at what

Lucy said; but others saw that it was true, and resolved to imitate her example. They no longer avoided Emily, in their hours of study or recreation; and they soon found that she was truly penitent for her fault, and earnest to behave well in future.

She always felt a great affection for Lucy, as she had been the first to treat her with kindness.

“You can hardly tell how much good you have done me,” she would sometimes say. “When all the scholars kept aloof from me, and seemed to think it a disgrace to be seen with me, my heart was hardened. I did not feel sorry for the wicked thing which I had done, but only mortified that it was discovered; but, the very moment that you spoke kindly to me, all my wicked feelings were gone. I felt very sad on account of my sin, but all my harsh, angry thoughts and feelings were softened. Even while you sat by me, to explain my lesson, I was praying to my Heavenly

Father; and O, Lucy, it was long since I had said the prayer before ! ”

Lucy threw her arms around Emily's neck, and mingled her tears with hers; but her heart was full of happiness, as she thought of the good results of her work of love.

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TRUTH.



NE afternoon in the winter, when Lizzie and her little brother Henry were playing pleasantly together in the parlor, they heard the door-bell ring loudly, and they both ran to open the door. They found a little girl there, with a large basket of bits of wood, which she had picked up around the new buildings. She

had been to their house several times before; and the children knew that she wished their mother to buy the wood for kindling the fire, and give her a few pennies for it. But Lizzie remembered that she had heard her mother say, a day or two before, that she did not think it would be right for her to buy the wood every time the little girl came, because she was not rich, and could not afford to spend money for what she did not really need; and their shed had been well filled with wood in the autumn, and there was still a great deal of it remaining.

So Lizzie said, "No, little girl; mother does not want any wood, to-day. You must try to sell it to some one else. Another time, mother will buy it."

But the child began to weep bitterly, and said, "O, my dear Miss! do beg your mother to buy my wood to-day, for we are in great trouble. My little brother has just died with scarlet fever, and my poor mother is sitting at home crying, as if her

heart would break. I have come out to try to earn a little money to buy a coffin, for we have not a cent to pay the funeral expenses."

The tears rolled down Lizzie's cheeks, as she listened to the sad tale, while little Henry exclaimed,

"What, little girl, is your brother dead who used to come here with wood, sometimes? I gave him my old hat, once."

"Yes, sir," replied the girl; "it is the same one. He took the fever at a house where he went to sell wood, and lived but three days."

"I will run and ask mother to buy your wood," said Henry; and he ran hastily up stairs into the room where his mother was sitting at work.

Mrs. Emmons listened to her little boy's story with much interest; and, taking some money from her purse, she went herself to the door. The girl repeated what she had told the children, with tears streaming down her cheeks; and Mrs. Emmons

bought her wood, and gave her two shillings for it, instead of four pennies, which was the usual price.

Lizzie begged to be allowed to give her a bright dime which she had in her pocket, and Henry gave her two pennies which he had saved to buy candy.

The little girl thanked them over and over again, and ran quickly away.

Lizzie and Henry could think of nothing else, for the remainder of the day ; and they wished that they were very rich, so that they could help all the poor people in the world.

The next day, when the children were sliding on the ice in front of their gate, a little boy came up to them, drawing a load of wood upon a sled, and asked if they would buy it. Lizzie and Henry stood quite still, looking at him, in great astonishment, for more than a minute.

At last, Henry exclaimed,
“Why, little boy, I thought you died with scarlet fever. Your sister told us so,

yesterday, and we gave her some money to help to buy a coffin."

"She did not speak the truth," replied the boy. "I have not been sick. Mother thought it was very strange how Susan got so much money for wood, yesterday."

"But she cried," said Henry. "The tears rolled down her cheeks, when she told us about you. How could she cry, if the story was not true?"

"I do not know," said the boy; "but you see that it was not true, for I am alive and well. I guess Susan will never want to show her face here again! Will your mother buy my wood?"

Lizzie said that her mother did not need any wood; and then both the children ran into the house as fast as they could, to tell their mother of the discovery they had made. She was as much surprised as they had been, for she had fully believed the story which the girl had told.

"What a wicked creature she must be!" said Lizzie. "We will never help

her again, if she is ever so poor, — will we, mother?"

"I should be sorry to say that, Lizzie. I would help any one who was suffering, even if I knew them to be very wicked; but I shall certainly be very cautious about believing what she tells me, another time. I think it very doubtful, however, if we ever see her again. She will feel ashamed to come here."

"I was glad to see the little boy alive and well," said Henry. "We need not feel sad about them any more, Lizzie."

"I feel more sad about them than I did before," remarked Mrs. Emmons. "It is dreadful to think that they are growing up in such wickedness and ignorance. You, my dear children, have kind friends continually near you, endeavoring to teach you to keep the commandments of the Lord; but perhaps these poor little ones have never even heard the commandments, and, although they may have been told that it is foolish to tell lies, because

they will sooner or later be found out, I doubt whether they were ever taught to shun lying because it is a sin against God."

The children looked very grave and thoughtful while their mother was speaking, and presently Lizzie said,

"We ought to be very good, when we are so well taught. I suppose it would be more wicked for us to tell a lie than for that poor girl, would it not, mother?"

"It would, indeed, my daughter. The more we know what is right, the more wicked it is for us to do what is wrong. I hope that both of my dear children will learn to be perfectly truthful in their words and actions."

"Have we not learned to be so, mother? I think that both Henry and I always speak the truth. I think it is very wicked to tell wrong stories."

Mrs. Emmons was just going to reply, when she was called out of the room, and Lizzie and Henry returned to their play.

An hour after, they were called in to study their lessons, for their mother spent some time every day in teaching them.

Lizzie was not very fond of study. She could learn her lessons easily and well; but she did not love to apply herself diligently, but allowed her mind to wander from one thing to another, instead of giving her whole attention to what she was about. She had just commenced a new rule in arithmetic, and it was somewhat difficult to understand. Her mother explained it to her, over and over again, very patiently; but still her sums were wrong, and it was necessary for her to "try, try again." The tears rolled down Lizzie's cheeks, as she bent over her slate; but Mrs. Emmons did not observe this, at first, for she was engaged in teaching Henry his reading-lesson. When she looked up, the tears had been wiped away; but she thought that Lizzie looked as if she had been crying, and she said, kindly, "Do not cry over your lesson, my child. You will soon

learn how to do those sums." Lizzie felt a little ashamed to think that she had shed tears for so trifling a cause, and she said, hastily,

"I am not crying, mother."

"Not now, Lizzie; but you have been, have you not?"

An evil spirit must have drawn near to Lizzie at this moment, for she replied,

"Not about my lesson, mother; my head aches badly."

"I am sorry for that, my dear," replied her mother. "You had better put away your books, for reading may increase the pain."

Lizzie obeyed, but she felt very sad. It was true that her head did ache a little; but she would not have thought of crying about it, if her lesson had not discouraged her. She felt that she had not spoken the exact truth, and this made her very unhappy.

It would have been better if she had confessed her fault to her mother, at once.

Then the evil spirits would have left her, and the angels would have drawn near to her, and she would have been happy again; but, as she did not do this, she was in more danger of committing the same fault another time.

Two or three times, in the course of the day, she was guilty of a little deception.

When Henry asked her to read to him in his pretty new story-book, his mother took the book, and said she would read, for fear it would make poor Lizzie's head feel worse. Lizzie did not like to say that the slight pain which she had felt was already gone, for fear her mother would suspect that she had not spoken the exact truth; and she sat leaning her head upon her hand, and looking as if it still ached hard, when, in reality, she felt perfectly well.

At dinner she ate but a small piece of bread, because she knew that her mother would think it wrong to give her any of the nice meat or pudding when she was not well. In the afternoon her mother ad-

vised her to lie down, and try to sleep for a little while; and Lizzie gladly went to her own room, for she felt so miserable that she wished to be alone.

“I am quite as wicked as the little girl who brought the wood,” she said to herself; “and, indeed, perhaps I am more so; for my dear mother has often taught me never to say what is not exactly true, and only this very morning I told her that I never told a lie, and now I have deceived her several times. Even lying here is deceiving her; for she would not wish me to do it, if she did not believe me to be sick.”

Poor Lizzie wept bitterly, as she lay on her little bed. At length she kneeled down, and prayed to her Heavenly Father to forgive the fault which she had committed, and to help her to be a better girl in future. This prayer made her feel much happier, and she saw clearly what she ought to do. She went immediately to her mother's room, and told her the whole truth.

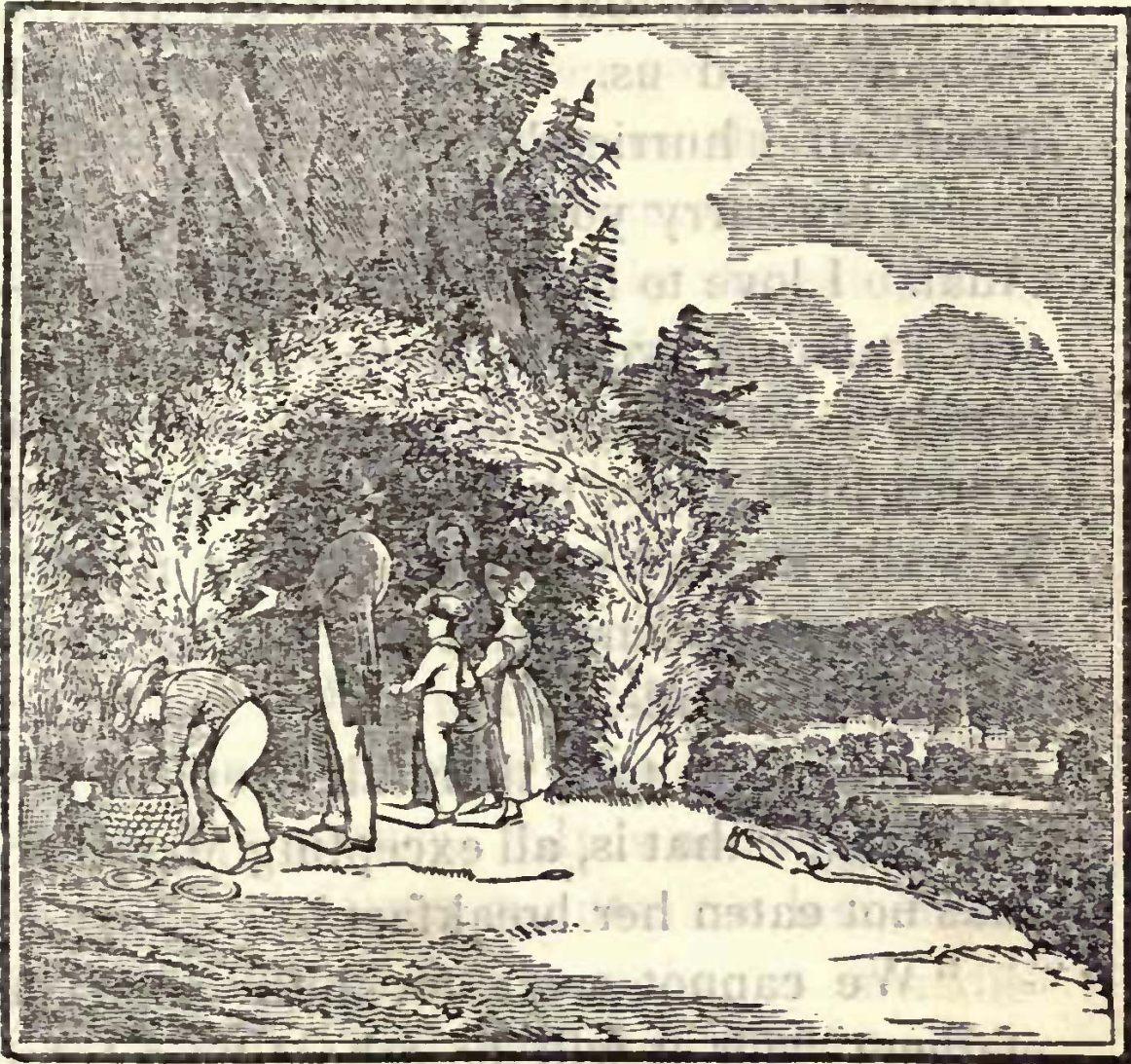
Her mother kissed her affectionately, and told her she would forgive her.

“I meant to have told you, this morning, dear Lizzie,” she said, “that it was wrong to feel so sure that you could not say what was not true. We are continually tempted to do wrong; and we must humbly look to the Lord for help, and remember that of ourselves we can do nothing right.”

“I will try to remember this, dear mother,” said Lizzie. “Every night and morning, when I say my prayers, I will pray that I may become perfectly truthful; and I will pray for that poor little girl who brought the wood also, for I pity her very much now; I do not feel so angry with her as I did. I have learned that it is very easy to do wrong, even when we know how to do right; and perhaps she has never been taught to be good.”

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LITTLE THINGS.



“You are late, this morning, my daughter,” said Mr. Lincoln, as his eldest daughter, a bright-looking little girl of ten years old, entered the room, and took her seat at the breakfast-table, just as the rest of the family had completed their meal.

“I did not think I should be so late,

father," Mary replied. "I felt so sleepy, this morning, that I did not get up when Susan called us. I thought I should be ready, if I hurried."

"I am sorry you were not more punctual. I love to have all my children present at family worship in the morning, and ready to sit down with us at the table. But come, little ones; this is a fine morning for a walk, and as many of you as mamma pleases may come with me into the fields, for a little while."

"You may take them all," replied Mrs. Lincoln; "that is, all excepting Mary; she has not eaten her breakfast."

"We cannot wait for her," said her father; "for it will be school-time before we return, if we do not go directly. So, come, Lizzie, and Willie, and Emma, — get your hats as soon as possible."

All the children loved to walk with their father; and Mary felt very sorry that she was not ready to accompany him. She would willingly have gone without

her breakfast; but she felt that her father was displeased with her, and she did not like to ask him to let her go.

She looked very sad, as she heard the joyful shouts of the children, as they passed the window; and presently she said,

“I should not think father would be displeased about such a little thing as not getting up in season! I could have been ready to have gone with him in five minutes.”

“Your father is displeased with your habit of inattention to little things, Mary,” replied her mother. “It is not *very* wrong to lie in bed fifteen minutes too late, in the morning, but it is not right; it is a disorderly habit, and you should try hard to correct it. It prevents you from being present at family worship, and from eating breakfast with the rest of us; and causes unnecessary delay in clearing the table, which is some inconvenience to me. You must not regard any fault as a trifling one which gives pain or inconvenience to others.”

Mary was silent ; but she did not feel the truth of what her mother said. In many respects she was a good child ; but she often neglected little duties, which would have added much to her own happiness, and that of her friends. “ It is such a little thing ! ” she would often say. “ It is no matter whether I do it or not.”

After Mary had finished her breakfast, she ran up stairs to put her room in order before it was time to prepare for school. She had learned to make a bed very neatly ; and you would have been pleased to have seen her shaking it up so nicely, and putting on the clothes so smoothly. But, even in making her bed, Mary was apt to neglect little things. When in a hurry, she did not always stop to tuck up the blanket carefully ; and sometimes, when her mother came into her room at night, she would find that the clothes had slipped off of the bed, and left poor Mary quite uncovered. Besides this, she would often throw the pillows on so carelessly that it

gave her bed an untidy appearance; for the pillows should be laid straight and even, on a neatly-made bed.

Then, in sweeping the room, there was the same fault. The greater part of it was well done, but there were certain little corners which Mary thought of no importance; and when wiping the dust from the furniture, she often forgot to wipe the rounds of the chairs, or the legs of the table. Mrs. Lincoln was generally obliged to go into Mary's room every day, and see that it was properly attended to, although Mary was quite capable of taking care of it herself, if she had not been so negligent of trifles.

Little Charlie, the baby, was not very well; and, after Mary had put her room in order, her mother asked her to give him a short ride in his willow wagon, as she thought the fresh air might do him good. Mary cheerfully consented; for she loved the baby, and was glad to be useful to him and her mother. She was always very

careful not to run with the wagon, or to turn it round too abruptly; and her mother knew that Charlie would be quite safe with her. And yet, although Mary meant to be a kind sister, she quite spoiled the pleasure which the little fellow would have taken in his rides, by her inattention to trifles. The baby was delighted with the bright flowers by the road-side, and eagerly stretched his little hands for them; but Mary was talking with a schoolmate who had overtaken her, and took no notice of his wishes. There were many other things on their way which would have delighted the child very much, if his sister had stopped the wagon for a moment, and allowed him to look at them, for the cows, sheep, dogs, geese, ducks and chickens, were as wonderful and interesting to him, as a collection of wild animals and rare birds would be to older children; but Mary walked rapidly along, drawing the wagon carefully, but paying no attention to Charlie's little wants. So, when they

got home, the baby seemed as fretful and unhappy as he did when he went away; and his mother was quite anxious and disappointed, to find that the ride had done him no good.

It was now time for the three eldest children to go to school; and Mary was, as usual, desired by her mother to take great care of her little brother and sister, and see that no harm befell them.

Mary promised, and meant to do so; but, as they were somewhat later than usual, she felt rather impatient, and was not willing to stop to attend to little things. Emma began to complain, when they were half way to the school-house, that there was a stone in her shoe, and begged Mary to take it out for her; but her sister thought it was a pity to stop for such a trifle, and persuaded the little girl to limp along to the school-house. This made her foot lame for many days.

Mary was a bright scholar; and yet she was not unfrequently disgraced at school,

from want of attention to what she considered the least important parts of her lessons.

If she had a lesson in geography to learn, she would readily commit the principal part of it to memory; but, if there were a great many places to find on the map, she generally looked out a few carefully, and then, giving a slight glance at the others, concluded that she knew their situation well enough, and that it would be quite useless to take the trouble to search out every particular place. Her lesson was, therefore, regarded as imperfect. With her other studies there was the same difficulty, —a neglect of little things, which, although they appeared to her unimportant, were, in reality, essential to a perfect recitation, and a correct understanding of her lesson. Just so with her writing. It had an unfinished look, which quite destroyed its beauty. The t's were not crossed; the i's were undotted; there were no points; or, if any, they were not correctly placed.

This was rather an unlucky day for Mary. She had displeased her father, by her tardiness, in the morning; had disappointed her mother, and deprived her little brother of the pleasure which he might have had in his ride; lamed poor Emma's foot, by neglecting to remove the stone, and been publicly reprimanded by her teacher, for habitual inattention. On their return home, her troubles did not cease. When they went up stairs, to put away their books, Willie asked her to tie his shoe; but she was busy just then, and answered, "I will do it presently, Willie; it is no matter now." The little boy was hungry, and ran hastily down stairs for his luncheon. The shoe-string was long, and unfortunately his foot became entangled in it, and he fell down several stairs, bruising his head sadly, and frightening him very much. It would have been much better to have tied the string; but who would have thought that the neglect of such a little thing would have done so much mischief?

It was Saturday, and there was no school in the afternoon. Mary's mother had given her leave to visit one of her school-mates, Cornelia Frazer, a girl nearly her own age.

Cornelia was glad to see her, and did all she could for her entertainment; but she could not devote the whole afternoon to play, because her mother was not well, and the family was large. Mary did not care for this. She gladly assisted her friend, and felt pleased when Mrs. Frazer said that it was a good thing to have two daughters to wait upon her. But she could not help observing how very particular Cornelia was about little things. In setting the table for tea, the crumb-cloth must be laid exactly straight, and the table-cloth must be without wrinkle. Each dish, plate, and knife and fork, were placed exactly in the right spot, and nothing that belonged on the table was left in the closet. Mary recollected how often she had been reproved because the crumb-

cloth was uneven, or the dishes put on in a careless manner; and how frequently she was obliged to jump up, during meals, and run to the closet for something which had been forgotten.

Cornelia's baby-brother was about the age of Charlie, and he, too, was teething, and inclined to be fretful; but his sister was so attentive to him, endeavoring as far as possible to give him what he needed, or what would please him, even before he asked for it, that she managed to keep him quite happy and pleasant, which was a great relief to her mother. There were other little ones to be attended to, also; and with them, as with the baby, Cornelia neglected nothing which could add to their comfort and happiness. When it was nearly time for her father to return home to tea, she moved his arm-chair into its customary place, and placed his slippers ready for him to put on.

"How thoughtful!" said Mary to herself. "I wonder if I could learn to be so

considerate?" and as she bade Cornelia good-night, and walked slowly home, she drew many comparisons between herself and her friend, and wished that she could be like her.

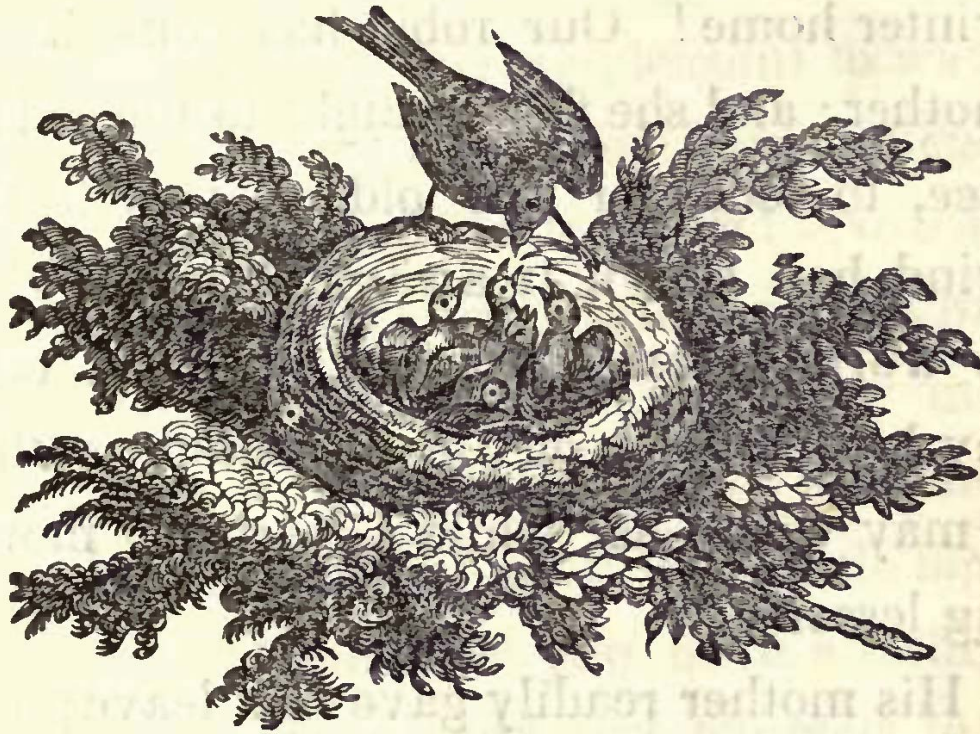
"How can I learn to be thoughtful, and to do right in little things, mother?" she asked, as she told her mother about her pleasant visit.

"By thinking more of the happiness of others, my dear child," replied Mrs. Lincoln, "and by always remembering that there is no duty too trifling to be performed in a proper manner, and at the proper time."

Mary made many good resolutions, that evening; and she kept them well. She became considerate and careful, and tried to do right in little things, as well as in great.

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LITTLE BY LITTLE THE BIRD BUILDS HER NEST.



I am so glad that spring has come again!" exclaimed Frank Harlow, as he came in from his little garden, one pleasant spring morning, and carefully placed his little spade and hoe in their accustomed places. "It is so pleasant to see the grass and flowers springing up, and to hear the songs of the little

birds who are just returning from their winter home! Our robin has come back, mother; and she flew straight to the cedar-tree, to look for her old nest; but the wind had blown it away. So she went to work to build another. May I take my book and sit on the door-step, so that I may watch her while I learn my morning lesson?"

His mother readily gave him leave; and after he had sat on the step a short time, she came to the door herself, and stood by his side.

"There, mother," said Frank, "there goes the robin, with a wisp of hay in her bill; she is carrying it to the tree. Why, there are two of them!" he continued. "Just look, mother! there are two robins with hay in their bills, and they both fly to the same place on the cedar-tree!"

“They are mates, I suppose,” replied his mother. “It is very pleasant to watch them at their work. See how patiently they weave in each little straw! Now the wind has blown away the last piece which they carried to the nest, and they must fly away in search of more. You may learn a useful lesson from these little birds, my son. Whenever you have a difficult task to perform, and feel tempted to be fretful and impatient, remember that patience and perseverance will overcome difficulties. Little by little the bird builds her nest; and little by little you will learn many things which you now know nothing about. But it is time for you to go to school, Frank. You can look at the robins again, when you return.”

Frank ran into the house, and got his books and slate; and then, bidding his

mother good-morning, he said, cheerfully, as he looked once more at the cedar-tree, "Good-by, little birds! I will not forget the lesson you have taught me. I will think of you when I am doing those hard sums, and looking for all those puzzling places on the map."

Then Frank ran merrily away, and was soon in the pleasant school-room, where his kind teacher, Miss Allen, was awaiting her little scholars.

Frank was an intelligent boy, and he could easily learn his lessons; but he was not very patient, and was easily discouraged. His mother knew this, when she bade him learn of the little birds to be patient and persevering.

"You have a long sum to do, to-day, Frank," said his teacher, as he carried his arithmetic to her, and asked for directions

about his lesson. "You must be very careful, and very patient, and then I think you will have no trouble in doing it."

Frank had forgotten the robins. He looked with dismay at the long line of figures before him.

"I can never add all those!" he said. "I never did such a long sum!"

"No," replied Miss Allen, smiling, "but you do not wish to learn what you already know. Every day you should try to learn something new. You will feel much pleased, if you succeed in doing this long sum correctly."

Frank still looked somewhat discontented; but he took his book, and returned to his seat. For nearly fifteen minutes he worked patiently, and then he again stood by his teacher.

She smiled kindly upon him, and, taking

the slate from his hand, added the numbers. His answer was wrong.

“Not right yet, Frank,” she said. “You forgot to carry, in one or two instances. Try once more; you will soon get it right.”

“I never shall!” said Frank, impatiently. “I knew I could not do it! It is of no use for me to try!”

“It will be of great use for you to try patiently, Frank. It will not only enable you to do the hard sum, but it will give you strength to overcome other difficulties. You must not expect to do everything right, the first time that you try. Little by little the bird builds her nest; and little by little you will learn to do many things which you now find troublesome.”

Frank looked in his teacher's face, with much surprise.

“Did you know about my robin?” he

asked. "Did you see her building her nest, as you came to school? I had quite forgotten what mother told me about being as patient as the little birds. I will try to remember it, now."

"No, Frank, I did not know about your robins. Are they building a nest near your house?"

"Yes, indeed, Miss Allen. The robin has come back to the old cedar-tree, and I have been watching her build her nest. Mother told me to learn the good lesson, from her, to be patient and persevering in difficulty. She said just what you did about little by little, and that made me think that you knew all about it."

"The good spirits, who are trying to show me how to help you to be a good boy, Frank, must have put it into my mind to say those words, to remind you of your

resolution. Now take your seat, and try again."

Frank obeyed, and patiently added the long columns of figures over and over again, until he felt quite sure that there was no mistake. When he handed his slate to Miss Allen, he said, pleasantly, "I think it is right, this time; but, if it is not, I will try again."

His teacher was glad to be able to tell him that his answer was perfectly correct; and Frank cheerfully took his geography and atlas, and was soon busily searching for mountains, cities, lakes and rivers. This lesson needed a good deal of patience; but Frank tried hard to keep the good spirits around him, and he succeeded in learning it perfectly and happily. He often thought of his robins, and wondered how their pretty nest came on; and when

school was dismissed, he ran home as fast as he could, and as soon as he had put away his books and spoken to his mother, he went into the garden. The robins were still at work. Frank peeped among the branches of the cedar-tree, and saw them weaving in straw after straw, with the greatest care and exactness. The nest was more than half finished ; and Frank fancied that the little birds sung more sweetly than they did in the morning, because they felt happy that they had got along so well with their work.

This was Saturday, and there was no school in the afternoon. Frank was glad of this, for he had long promised to make a little wagon for his sister to draw her doll in, and he resolved to go to work upon it, after dinner. His mother had given him a small box for the body of the wagon, and

he thought that he could easily make the wheels and axle-trees, and fasten them on.

It was a more difficult task than he had anticipated, however.

Little Mary stood by his side, watching him with great interest. He succeeded very well with the first wheel; but the second one split, when he had nearly finished it. He tried again, but with no better success. Frank was growing impatient.

"I cannot make a wagon, Mary!" he said, fretfully. "It is of no use for me to try! The wood keeps splitting, all the time!" Mary looked much disappointed.

"Do try, Frank!" she said. "You have only split two wheels. Perhaps the third one will be good."

Frank yielded to her entreaties, and tried once more. The wheel did not split, this

time, but, by some carelessness, he made it a little smaller than the others. This vexed him still more; and he threw down his tools, and walked away from the shop, toward the house. As he passed the cedar-tree, he heard the robins singing blithely among the branches. He looked at the nest. It was finished, and the patient little builders were pouring forth their song of joy, as they looked at their snug house.

“Little by little the bird builds her nest,” thought Frank; “and little by little I might make Mary’s wagon, if I were patient and persevering. Come, Mary,” he added, turning to his sister, who had followed him, looking very sad, “let us go back to the shop. I will try once more.”

All went right, this time. Frank worked patiently and carefully. The wagon was soon completed, and Miss Dolly seated in it for a pleasant ride.

Frank's dreams were pleasant, that night, for he had tried to overcome an evil habit. His mother smiled, when, as she bent over him, to see if he was comfortable, before she went to rest, his lips moved, and he murmured, "Little by little the bird builds her nest."

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